

People Born Outside the United States

March 2006

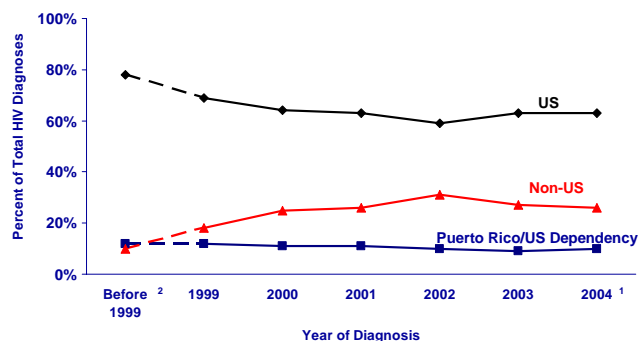
Introduction

Immigrants and refugees, people born outside the United States (US), are estimated to make up 12% of the population of Massachusetts. The refugee and immigrant population of Massachusetts is very diverse with almost every country in the world represented. Refugees and immigrants living with HIV/AIDS in Massachusetts are also a very diverse group (107 countries represented) and are predominantly people of color (88%). They accounted for 18% of people living with HIV/AIDS on December 31, 2004 and their proportional representation has been increasing over time. The proportion of non-US-born among annual AIDS diagnoses increased from 9% in 1995 to 29% in 2002 and then decreased to 23% in 2004.

General Statistics:

- Within the three-year period 2002 to 2004, 785 people born outside the United States were diagnosed with HIV infection, representing 28% of HIV diagnoses in Massachusetts during that time period.
- The proportion of HIV infection diagnoses represented by people born outside the United States has risen in the past 5 years from 18% in 1999 to 26% in 2004.

Figure 1. Percentage Distribution of People Diagnosed with HIV Infection by Place of Birth and Year of Diagnosis: Massachusetts, Before 1999, 1999-2004¹



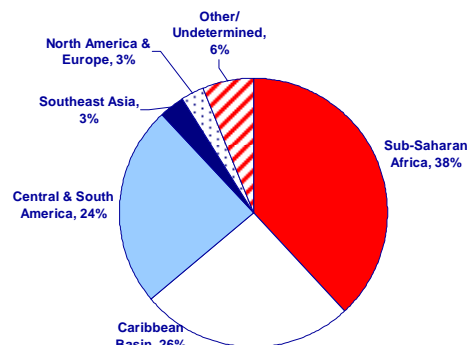
¹ 2004 data are preliminary; ² Note: a dashed line is used to distinguish between pre-1999 data (which is an aggregate of multiple years before the implementation of HIV surveillance in 1999) and annual data for subsequent years. Data Source: MDPH HIV/AIDS Surveillance Program; Data as of 7/1/05

- As of December 31, 2004, there were 2,699 people living with HIV/AIDS who were born outside the United States, accounting for 18% of people living with HIV/AIDS in Massachusetts.

World Region and Country of Origin:

- People born outside the United States and diagnosed with HIV infection within the three-year period 2002 to 2004 were primarily from Sub-Saharan Africa (38%), the Caribbean Basin (26%), and Central and South America (24%).

Figure 2. People Born Outside the US and Diagnosed with HIV Infection in Massachusetts Within the Years 2002 to 2004 by World Region of Origin



Data Source: MDPH HIV/AIDS Surveillance Program; Data as of 7/1/05

- Among non-US-born females recently diagnosed with HIV infection, 53% are from Sub-Saharan Africa compared to 26% of the males, 25% are from the Caribbean Basin compared to 28% of the males and 13% are from Central and South America compared to 33% of the males.

The following five countries account for the largest numbers of non-US-born people diagnosed with HIV infection in Massachusetts within the three-year period 2002 to 2004:

- Haiti 12% (N=130)
- Brazil 8% (N=80)
- Uganda 5% (N=52)
- Kenya 5% (N=51)
- Cape Verde 4% (N=41)

Regional Distribution:

The largest proportions of people recently diagnosed with HIV infection who were born outside the United States reside in the Metrowest (45%) and Northeast (39%) Health Service Regions (HSR). In all regions but the Western and Southeast HSRs, people born outside the United States represent more than 20% of all recent diagnoses. Among people living with HIV/AIDS, the Metrowest (30%), Boston (22%) and Northeast (22%) HSR have the highest proportions of non-US-born.

Among cities with over 20 people diagnosed with HIV infection within the three-year period 2002 to 2004, the following have the highest proportions of diagnoses among non-US-born people (N=number of people born outside the United States diagnosed with HIV infection):

- Chelsea 73% (N=27)
- Lowell 69% (N=62)
- Lawrence 67% (N=44)
- Malden 66% (N=27)
- Holyoke 60% (N=27)
- Worcester 56% (N=90)
- Framingham 54% (N=19)
- Lynn 49% (N=25)
- Brockton 45% (N=31)
- New Bedford 37% (N=25)

Gender:

- Forty-five percent of non-US-born people recently diagnosed with HIV infection are female (and 55% are male) compared to 23% born in the United States and 38% born in Puerto Rico and other US dependencies (countries that are supported and governed by the United States).

- Among non-US-born people living with HIV/AIDS, 40% are female compared to 26% born in the United States and 32% born in Puerto Rico and other US dependencies.

Race and Ethnicity:

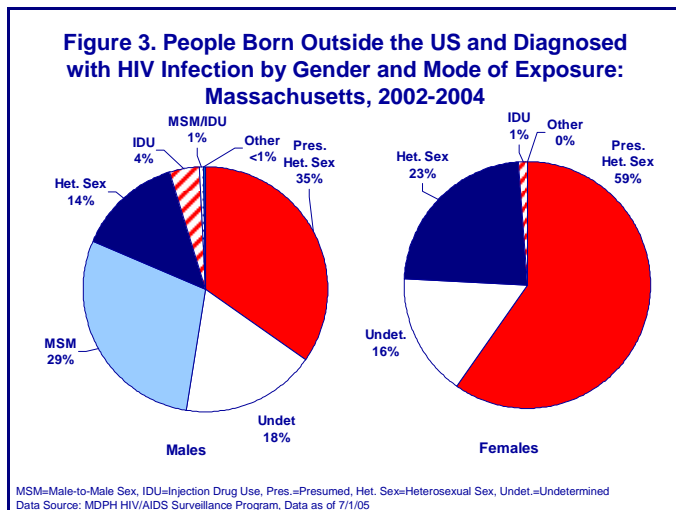
- Among non-US-born people diagnosed with HIV infection within the three-year period 2002 to 2004, 10% are white (non-Hispanic), 61% are black (non-Hispanic), 24% are Hispanic, and 4% are Asian/Pacific Islander.
- Similarly, among non-US-born people living with HIV/AIDS, 12% are white (non-Hispanic), 59% are black (non-Hispanic), 23% are Hispanic, and 5% are Asian/Pacific Islander.
- Seventy-six percent of non-US-born females recently diagnosed with HIV infection are black (non-Hispanic) compared to 49% of males; 14% are Hispanic compared to 31% of males and 5% are white (non-Hispanic) compared to 14% of males.

Exposure Mode:

- Among people born outside the United States and diagnosed with HIV infection within the three-year period 2002 to 2004, 46% (N=362) were presumed exposed to HIV through heterosexual sex with partners of unknown risk and HIV status (presumed heterosexual); 18% (N=141) identified the risk of their heterosexual partner and were classified as exposed through heterosexual sex; 16% (N=126) were exposed through male-to-male sex (MSM), while an additional 3% (N=20) were reported to have been exposed through their own injection drug use.
- Among non-US-born people living with HIV/AIDS on December 31, 2004, the distribution of exposure modes is similar to that among non-US-born individuals recently diagnosed with HIV infection. Forty-two percent (N=1,126) were presumed exposed to HIV through heterosexual sex with partners of unknown risk and HIV status (presumed heterosexual); 21% (N=560) identified the risk of their heterosexual partner and were classified as exposed through heterosexual sex.

Nineteen percent (N=517) were exposed through male-to-male sex (MSM), while an additional 5% (N=142) were exposed through their own injection drug use.

- Among non-US-born people with HIV infection and AIDS, large proportions were classified with undetermined risk for HIV infection: 17% (N=133) of those recently diagnosed with HIV infection and 11% (N=285) of those living with HIV/AIDS. This represents challenges in ascertaining behavioral risk information about non-US-born individuals.



- Complete information about risk behaviors that provided exposure to HIV does not exist for three-quarters of females born outside the United States and recently diagnosed with HIV infection: for 59% there was no information about the risk or HIV status of the male sex partner reported and for 16% there was absolutely no information about risk reported.

People Diagnosed with HIV Infection and AIDS within Two Months

People who already have AIDS when HIV infection is diagnosed (or who are diagnosed with AIDS within 2 months of HIV infection diagnosis) represent a population that may have first learned about their HIV status late in the progression of HIV disease. It is likely that people who are diagnosed with both HIV infection and AIDS within two months have been infected for more time prior to learning their HIV status than people who learn their status earlier in the course of infection.

- Thirty-seven percent of people born outside the US who were diagnosed with HIV infection within the three-year period 2002 to 2004 already had AIDS when they were diagnosed (or were diagnosed within 2 months), compared to 25% of people born in the US and 27% of people born in Puerto Rico and other US Dependencies.

Mortality with HIV/AIDS

- The proportion of deaths among people with AIDS who were non-US-born people remained relatively steady from 1999 to 2004, fluctuating between 5% and 10%.

Data Source:

HIV/AIDS Case Data: Massachusetts Department of Public Health (MDPH) HIV/AIDS Surveillance Program, Data as of July 1, 2005

Additional References of Interest:

Foley EE. HIV/AIDS and African immigrant women in Philadelphia: structural and cultural barriers to care. *AIDS Care*. 2005 Nov;17(8):1030-43

Ford K, King G, Nerenberg L, Rojo C. AIDS Knowledge and Risk Behaviors Among Midwest Migrant Farm Workers. *AIDS Education & Prevention*. 2001;13(6):551-560

Freeman RC, Williams ML, Saunders LA. "Drug use, AIDS knowledge, and HIV risk behaviors of Cuban-American, and Puerto Rican-born drug injectors who are recent entrants into the United States." *Substance Use Misuse*. 1999, Nov; 34(13):1765-93.

Harawa NT, Bingham TA, Cocxhoran SD, Greenland S, Cunningham WE. HIV prevalence among foreign and U.S.-born clients of public STD clinics. *American Journal of Public Health*. 2002, Dec; 92(12): 1958-63.

Shedlin MG, Decena CU, Oliver-Velez D. Initial acculturation and HIV risk among new Hispanic immigrants. *J Natl Med Assoc*. 2005 Jul;97(7 Suppl):32S-37S

For more detailed information and a description of data limitations please see "HIV/AIDS in Massachusetts: An Epidemiologic Profile," available online at www.mass.gov/dph/aids